



For Immediate Release
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Injunction Sought to Stop PA DOT from Undertaking Environmentally Damaging Bridge Construction in Tinicum

Tinicum Township, Bucks County, PA. The Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) took legal action today to stop the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) from proceeding with two environmentally damaging bridge replacements in Tinicum Township, Bucks County, PA. A lawsuit has been filed in the Bucks County Court of Common Pleas, Doylestown, and seeks an emergency order enjoining PennDOT from demolition and/or construction of the Headquarters Road Replacement Bridge Project until the project can undergo legal and enhanced environmental review. The two bridges at issue carry Headquarters Road over Little Tinicum Creek (a/k/a Sundale Creek) at the intersection of Cafferty Road and near Tetteemer Road, in Tinicum Township, Bucks County.

According to the complaint, the Delaware Riverkeeper Network opposes the project based on water quality concerns, including inadequate consideration of adverse impacts to Little Tinicum Creek designated a Pennsylvania Exceptional Value (EV) stream, inadequate consideration of anti-degradation requirements for the watershed, a failure of the project to obtain a NPDES permit required by the Clean Water Act, and the nuisance created by the project.

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“This project, as planned, will not improve traffic because there isn’t a problem at these locations; but it will increase pollution, runoff, erosion, and other harms to a creek that is an essential part of the beauty and character of Tinicum Township and Bucks County. This creek supports recreation including fishing, it inspires art, and it delivers high quality water that helps protect the Delaware River and all the uses it supports including drinking water. Placing a cookie cutter approach to bridge construction in this environmentally sensitive and historic community defies thoughtful logic,” says Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.

Claims by PennDOT that litigation would result in costly delays were rejected by residents. According to local Resident Greg Czura, "PennDOT created this situation when it filed plans that misrepresented the actual area being disturbed by these bridge projects and by its failure to get the appropriate permits for this construction. PennDOT should follow the law just like the rest of us."

“That PennDOT, a State agency, would so recklessly pursue a bridge project that puts in jeopardy an Exceptional Value stream without genuine effort to avoid the harm, without genuine consideration of the degradation that construction would bring, and even without the permits that are required by law sets bad precedent and violates the agencies obligation to protect our communities and environment. Exceptional Value streams are increasingly rare in Pennsylvania; it is vital that this designation is honored not just on the books but in the real world,” said Maya van Rossum.

According to the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, the PennDOT plan would significantly expand the roadway reducing the buffer around the stream leading to more runoff and more pollutants from cars and trucks being carried into the Little Tinicum. At public meetings residents have expressed fear the project could lead to more truck traffic through an environmentally sensitive watershed.

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